

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

COMIDEASTFOR IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 158879

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:MASS, PFOR, YE, SA, UR

SUBJECT: YARG INTENTION TO ACCEPT SOVIET MILITARY ASSISTANCE

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REF: SANA 1755

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SISCO AND ATHERTON

1. DEPARTMENT HAS CAREFULLY CONSIDERED YOUR ACCOUNT OF ASNAG'S REMARKS AND YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS OF WHAT WE SHOULD DO RE YARG'S STATED INTENTION TO ACCEPT SUBSTANTIAL NEW MILITARY AID FROM SOVIETS. WE SHARE CONCERN OVER ADVERSE EFFECT ON PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY IN SOUTH ARABIAN/LOWER RED SEA AREA FROM REINTRODUCTION OF SIGNIFICANT SOVIET INFLUENCE IN NORTH YEMEN; ALSO, OVER POTENTIAL SERIOUS DAMAGE TO NORTH YEMEN'S RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA. WE AGREE THAT URGENT EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO DETER YARG FROM THIS STEP. BELIEVE THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL REASONS WHY YARG SHOULD ITSELF BE FIRST TO INFORM SAG OF ITS INTENTIONS. WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS WITH AMBASSADOR AKINS, WHO AGREES THAT SAUDIS WOULD BE RESENTFUL AND PROBABLY REACT ADVERSELY IF THEY FIRST LEARNED OF YARG INTENTIONS FROM US. WE ARE PREPARED TO BACK UP YARG DEMARCHE TO SAG AND

TO REINFORCE OUR MANY EFFORTS TO GET SAG TO ACT POSITIVELY AND PROMPTLY ON PROPOSED COLLABORATION UNDER WHICH SAG WOULD FINANCE PURCHASE OF US WEAPONS FOR NORTH YEMEN, INCLUDING AN "IMPACT PACKAGE" FOR EARLY DELIVERY.

2. YOU SHOULD SEEK EARLY MEETING WITH ASNAG AND SAY YOU HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO GIVE USG REACTION AS FOLLOWS TO ASNAG'S ACCOUNT TO YOU ON JULY 3 OF YARG'S INTENTION TO ANNOUNCE ON JULY 9 THAT PRESIDENT HAMDI HAS ACCEPTED INVITATION TO VISIT MOSCOW AND THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WILL TRIGGER IMMEDIATE SOVIET SUPPLY OF KEY MILITARY EQUIPMENT. USG HAS READ YOUR ACCOUNT WITH GREAT CARE AND WISHES FRANKLY TO SHARE WITH YARG ITS CONCERN OVER EFFECT OF YARG'S INTENDED ACTION. WE APPRECIATE YARG'S FRUSTRATION OVER DELAYS AND DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING POSITIVE SAG RESPONSE TO CONCRETE PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE BY USG REGARDING COLLABORATION AMONG OUR THREE GOVERNMENTS IN SUPPLYING ARMS TO NORTH YEMEN. WE HAVE PLACED SUB-
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STANTIAL IMPORTANCE ON THOSE PROPOSALS (AND CONTINUE TO DO SO) ON FOLLOWING GROUNDS: (A) NEED TO BOLSTER NORTH YEMEN'S DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY AND SUPPORT YARG'S EFFORTS TO DEVISE AND SUPPORT WELL-BALANCED OVERALL PROGRAM FOR THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT; (B) STIMULUS IT WOULD PROVIDE TO ENHANCED COOPERATION BETWEEN NORTH YEMEN AND SAUDI ARABIA, IN CONVICTION THAT GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THEM ARE ESSENTIAL TO SECURITY OF BOTH COUNTRIES AND TO BROADER OUTLOOK FOR PEACE AND PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH ARABIAN REGION; AND (C) DESIRABILITY OF LIMITING THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THE SOVIET UNION TO INCREASE ITS PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE IN THE REGION, A VIEW WHICH WE HAVE BELIEVED TO BE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH YARG'S OWN CONCERNS OVER THE IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUED SOVIET

STRENGTH IN PDRY AND ELSEWHERE IN THE REGION.

3. YOU SHOULD GO ON THAT, DESPITE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF YARG'S FRUSTRATION OVER SAG'S DILATORINESS IN ACTING ON OUR PENDING PROPOSALS, WE WERE GREATLY DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN THAT IT NOW PLANNING TO RENEW MAJOR MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH USSR. SUCH STEP WILL INEVITABLY, IN OUR BELIEF, RESULT IN SHARP ADVERSE REACTION IN SAUDI ARABIA, TENDING PROBABLY TO CONFIRM IN SAUDI MINDS THE LINGERING SUSPICIONS WHICH SOME SAUDI LEADERS HAVE CONTINUED TO HAVE OVER YARG INTENTIONS. SAUDIS WILL BE RIGHTLY CONCERNED OVER RENEWAL AND EXPANSION OF SOVIET MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN NORTH YEMEN. WE WONDER HOW THIS MIGHT AFFECT SAUDI ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NORTH YEMEN. WE ALSO WONDER HOW

OTHER FRIENDLY ARAB STATES NOW PROVIDING FINANCIAL HELP TO NORTH YEMEN MAY REACT. HAS YARG TAKEN THIS ADEQUATELY INTO CONSIDERATION?

4. YOU SHOULD REFER TO ASNAG'S STATEMENT TO YOU THAT HE IS CERTAIN NO ONE IN WASHINGTON WILL CRITICIZE YARG FOR ACCEPTING SOVIET OFFER OF ARMS. SO FAR AS USG IS CONCERNED, WE FULLY ACCEPT THAT WHAT IT DOES ON THIS MATTER IS A DECISION FOR THE YARG TO MAKE. WE DO NOT QUESTION THAT AT ALL. BUT DECISIONS LIKE THIS ALSO ENTAIL A CONCURRENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EFFECTS OF THE DECISION, AND SUCH A MAJOR POLICY SHIFT CANNOT FAIL TO HAVE EFFECTS
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DESPITE BEST WISHES AND EFFORTS OF ALL CONCERNED TO AVOID THEM. YOU HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY TO YARG THAT USG WOULD REGRET A DECISION TO BRING SOVIETS BACK IN FORCE IN MILITARY SPHERE IN NORTH YEMEN. YARG SHOULD BE IN NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT.

5. WE DO APPRECIATE ASNAG'S INFORMING US IN ADVANCE. IN SPIRIT OF THE VERY FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, WE WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO URGE YARG TO INFORM SAG URGENTLY AND FULLY, IF IT HAS NOT ALREADY DONE SO, CONCERNING ITS PROPOSED NEW MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH USSR. IF YARG'S INTENTION IS NOT CONVEYED DIRECTLY TO SAUDIS BEFORE IT BECOMES A FACT, THEY ARE LIKELY TO REACT EVEN MORE SHARPLY THAN OTHERWISE AND WE BELIEVE THEY WOULD HAVE LEGITIMATE REASON TO DO SO. WE HAVE READ INTO ASNAG'S REMARKS TO YOU A SUGGESTION THAT USG TAKE THE LEAD IN INFORMING SAG OF DILEMMA FACING YARG AND WHAT YARG PLANS TO DO BY ITS ANNOUNCEMENT ON JULY 9. WE BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT IT PREFERABLE FOR YARG TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE TO SAG IN FIRST INSTANCE. YOU SHOULD ADD THAT, ONCE SAG HAS HEARD STORY DIRECTLY FROM YARG, WE WILL BE PREPARED TO FOLLOW UP AS APPROPRIATE WITH SAG CONCERNING OUR PENDING PROPOSALS FOR THREE-WAY

COLLABORATION IN ARMS SUPPLY, INCLUDING PROMPT DELIVERY OF AN INITIAL PACKAGE TO PROVIDE EARLY EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH COLLABORATION.

6. IF ASNAG RESPONDS THAT FAILURE TO GET SAG AGREEMENT ON DATES OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITS BY YARG OFFICIALS STANDS IN WAY OF INFORMING SAG BEFORE JULY 9, YOU SHOULD CONVEY OUR BELIEF THAT (A) YARG CAN FIND SOMEWAY TO COMMUNICATE THE NECESSARY MESSAGE TO SAG, AND THAT (B) IN ANY EVENT, PROPOSED JULY 9 ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE MADE BEFORE YARG HAS ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH SAG. SEEMS TO US THAT WHAT IS AT STAKE IS SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT FOR YARG NOT TO BE BOUND BY SHORT AND ARBITRARY DEADLINE.

7. AT YOUR DISCRETION, ESPECIALLY IF YOU BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO EMPHASIZE IMPORT OF YOUR INSTRUCTIONS AS CONTAINED HEREIN, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO (A) INFORM ASNAG
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THAT YOU WOULD LIKE VERY EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER ALSO WITH PRESIDENT HAMD, OR (B) TO SEEK APPOINTMENT DIRECTLY WITH HAMD.

8. BEGIN FYI: WE ARE PUZZLED BY SOME ASPECTS OF ASNAG'S DEMARCHE TO YOU. IT IS INCONSISTENT WITH PATTERN OF RECENT YARG ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS TO YOU, INCLUDING (A) DEPCINC'S CAIRO INTERVIEW, (B) ASNAG'S BROAD PLAN TO INFLUENCE SAG, AS REPORTED IN SANA 1487, AND (C) HAMD'S APPARENTLY CORDIAL RECEPTION IN SAUDI ARABIA IN MAY AND IN HIS TOUR OF OTHER ANTI-COMMUNIST GULF STATES LATE IN JUNE. WE THEREFORE WONDER IF ASNAG'S APPROACH MAY NOT BE POWER PLAY TO FORCE ACTION BY US, BUT AGREE WE CANNOT TAKE CHANCE HE IS BLUFFING AND SIMPLY IGNORE IT.

9. WE CONTINUE TO SEE SUBSTANTIAL REASONS FOR NOT ENTERING INTO DIRECTLY USG-FINANCED ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP OF ANY SIZE WITH YARG. THERE IS AT PRESENT NO MAP FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR SUCH PURPOSE. WE BELIEVE THERE WOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION TO INTRODUCTION OF A NEW MAP EQUIPMENT PROGRAM FOR YARG - GIVEN, AMONG OTHER THINGS, POTENTIAL AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FROM YARG'S OIL-RICH ARAB NEIGHBORS. WE DO NOT, IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDER IT FEASIBLE TO TRY TO PREEMPT SOVIETS THROUGH US-FUNDED PROGRAM. WE CONTINUE STRONGLY TO SUPPORT THREE-WAY COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM RELYING ON SAUDI FUNDING AS THE WAY TO DO WHAT IS NEEDED IN THIS SITUATION. END FYI.

10. FOR CAIRO: IT OCCURS TO US THAT EGYPT (PERHAPS THROUGH ASHRAF MARWAN-KAMAL ADHAM CHANNEL) MIGHT BE OF

SOME HELP TO YARG IN RIYADH IN THIS MATTER, AND THAT
SCOTES MIGHT SUGGEST TO ASNAG THAT YARG QUICKLY INFORM GOE
OF ITS INTENTIONS RE SOVIET ARMS. IF YOU AGREE, PLEASE
SO ADVISE SCOTES WITH ANY THOUGHTS YOU MAY HAVE ON HOW HE
MIGHT SUGGEST TO YARG THAT IT APPROACH GOE. KISSINGER

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